

**Minutes: Meeting of the Ad Hoc Fort Ward Park and Museum Area Stakeholder Advisory Group
November 14, 2012**

Present:

Tom Fulton
Ellen Stanton
Ripley Forbes

Chuck Ziegler
Linda Ries
Jim Walpole

Chuck Ziegler
Janice Magnuson

Staff Present:

OHA:

Lance Mallamo
Fran Bromberg

RPCA:

Laura Durham

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by chair Tom Fulton at 7:05 p.m. The chair noted with sadness the sudden passing of Frances Terrell's son. The members expressed their condolences to Frances and to family and friends.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the meeting of October 10, 2012 were approved as submitted. The September 2012 minutes were amended to read as follows:

Draft Recreation Chapter, "Recreational Use: Issues and Recommendations", Bob Moir and Ripley Forbes:

Ripley presented the chapter on recreational use of the park. He noted that there is no comprehensive plan for the park; rather it evolved over time in piecemeal fashion. Fort Ward was established to preserve the Civil War fort and formally opened as Fort Ward Historic Park and Museum however over time a playground, dog park, picnic area, arboretum, and soccer and tennis fields/courts were added to the park. This was accomplished in an ad hoc manner. The park is the major passive recreation venue for the residents in the west end of Alexandria. After presenting the background and current situation, the authors of the chapter included eight significant recommendations. These recommendations include creation of a natural walkway, removal of the playground to another area, removal of the cement surrounding the arborist memorial, improvements in the roadway loop, removal of the dog park, commitment of resources to maintenance, restoring the gate between the athletic field and passive recreation area, and strengthening the picnic procedures.

Public input will be attained before any changes in the uses/amenities of the park are made. Members engaged in a discussion of some of the recommendations. There is a hierarchy of uses of the park, with some uses seen as essential to the mission of the park. The members expressed various opinions regarding the recommendations and raised additional questions such as whether there should be a playground or a dog run in the park at all. The playground is not ADA accessible and in the direct path of run-off and, at the very least, will need to be relocated.

Members were asked to please send any comments about the report to Ripley.

Old Business:

Addendum to November 14, Draft Minutes of the Fort Ward Advisory Group

Approval of Minutes: The Chair noted that at the October 10, 2012 meeting a resolution was approved to change the September minutes **if a majority** of the members approved the following change after it was circulated electronically by the Chair. By that motion, Adrienne Washington agreed to submit the following:

“Her [Lena Rainey] comments were made to raise concerns, also expressed by Adrienne Washington about the need for investigation and clarification from OHA about the disparities and misunderstandings which were created by the OHA press release and media statements stating they had “completed” searching for graves in the Park.”

However, a majority of Committee members did not vote and thus the text of the September minutes will not be altered.”

Status of RFP - Laura Durham:

Laura Durham reported that the Request for Proposals finally has been issued. Requests are due by December 11. The allocation is expected to take place in January 2013. The Advisory Group can be extended beyond September 2013 because the RFP process has taken longer than expected.

Interpretive Signs

Lance Mallamo reported that 6 interpretive signs are ready and that temporary placement locations have been decided. It was suggested that the Advisory Group have a field trip to see the placement locations.

Archaeology Timeline - Fran Bromberg:

Fran presented a timeline to the group as follows:

January - Cemetery /Grave Summary

February – Civil War Summary

March – Draft from Ottery’s Work

April – Draft History Report

May – Final Stage I and Stage IIB Reports

June – Draft Inventory

September – Final History Report

October – Draft Stage IIA Report

December – Final Inventory and Stage IIA report

Request for Proposal s for the permanent drainage system design will go out to bid soon. Stage IIB archaeology will be scheduled when preliminary design plans have been determined.

New Business:

None

Next meeting:

Wednesday, December 12, at 7 pm at the Minnie Howard School library.

The meeting was **adjourned** at 8:40 pm.

Submitted,

Ellen Stanton, Secretary